IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in this application.

D1

1. (Currently Amended) A method for producing L-glutamic acid, comprising ~~the steps of~~ cultivating a coryneform bacteria in a liquid medium to produce and accumulate L-glutamic acid in the medium, and collecting the L-glutamic acid,

wherein a penicillin binding protein (PBP) is not produced or the function of a penicillin binding protein is reduced or eliminated in said coryneform bacteria due to a mutation in said produced penicillin binding protein,

wherein said penicillin binding protein is encoded by a DNA which comprises nucleotides 881 to 2623 of SEQ ID NO:1, or a DNA which is hybridizable with a nucleotide sequence comprising at least nucleotides 881 to 2623 of SEQ ID NO:1 under stringent conditions and which codes for a penicillin binding protein, wherein the stringent conditions comprise washing at 60°C in 1 X SSC and 0.1% SDS, and

wherein said bacteria have the ability to produce L-glutamic acid.

2. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the ~~coryneform bacteria are bacteria in which a~~ penicillin binding protein is produced or the function of a penicillin binding protein is not reduced or eliminated at a first temperature and ~~a~~ the penicillin binding protein is not produced or the function of a penicillin binding protein is reduced or eliminated at a second temperature because of a mutation in said [produced] penicillin binding protein ~~at a second temperature~~,

comprising ~~the steps of~~ cultivating the coryneform bacteria at the first temperature to proliferate the coryneform bacteria, and cultivating the coryneform bacteria at the second temperature to produce L-glutamic acid.

3. (Currently Amended) The method according to claim 2, wherein the coryneform bacteria ~~are bacteria which harbor~~ comprise a plasmid comprising ~~a gene~~ the DNA coding for ~~a~~ the penicillin binding protein and a temperature sensitive replication control region, and in which ~~said PBP gene~~ the DNA encoding the penicillin binding protein, which is on ~~the~~ a bacterial chromosome does not function, which DNA also comprises nucleotides 881 to 2623 of SEQ ID NO:1 or a DNA which is hybridizable to at least nucleotides 881 to 2623 of SEQ ID NO:1 under stringent conditions, which comprise washing at 60°C in 1 X SSC and 0.1% SDS; and the plasmid can replicate at the first temperature, and cannot replicate at the second temperature.

Claim 4 (Previously canceled).

Claim 5 (Canceled).

6. (Previously Amended) The method according to claim 1, wherein the penicillin binding protein has the amino acid sequence shown in SEQ ID NO:2.

7. (Previously Amended) The method according to claim 3, wherein the PBP gene has a nucleotide sequence comprising at least nucleotides 881 to 2623 of SEQ ID NO:1.

8. (Previously Amended) A DNA which codes for a protein which has the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:2.

9. (Currently Amended) A DNA derived from coryneform bacterium, said DNA is defined in the following (a) or (b):

(a) a DNA which comprises at nucleotides 881 to 2623 of SEQ ID NO:1;

(~~B~~ b) a DNA which is hybridizable with a nucleotide sequence comprising at least nucleotides 881 to 2623 of SEQ ID NO:1 under a stringent condition, which comprises washing at 60°C in 1 X SSC and 0.1% SDS, and wherein said DNA codes for a protein having the ability to bind to penicillin.

Claim 10 (Canceled)

11. (New) The DNA of Claim 9, which is (a).

12. (New) The DNA of Claim 9, which is (b).

13. (New) A vector comprising the DNA of Claim 11.

14. (New) A vector comprising the DNA of Claim 12.

15. (New) A bacterial cell comprising the vector of Claim 13.

16. (New) A bacterial cell comprising the vector of Claim 14.

17. (New) The method according to claim 1, wherein at least a portion of the DNA which comprises nucleotides 881 to 2623 of SEQ ID NO:1 or a DNA which is hybridizable with a nucleotide sequence comprising at least nucleotides 881 to 2623 of SEQ ID NO:1 is deleted such that the function of the penicillin binding protein is reduced or eliminated.

18. (New) The method according to claim 1, wherein said penicillin binding protein is encoded by a DNA which comprises nucleotides 881 to 2623 of SEQ ID NO:1.

19. (New) The method according to claim 1, wherein said penicillin binding protein is encoded by DNA which is hybridizable with a nucleotide sequence comprising at least nucleotides 881 to 2623 of SEQ ID NO:1 under stringent conditions, which comprise washing at 60°C in 1 X SSC and 0.1% SDS.

20. (New) In a method of making a seasoning, the improvement comprising producing L-glutamic acid according to the method according to claim 1.

21. (New) In a method of making a seasoning, the improvement comprising producing L-glutamic acid according to the method according to claim 2.

22. (New) In a method of making a seasoning, the improvement comprising producing L-glutamic acid according to the method according to claim 3.

23. (New) In a method of making a seasoning, the improvement comprising producing L-glutamic acid according to the method according to claim 6.

24. (New) In a method of making a seasoning, the improvement comprising producing L-glutamic acid according to the method according to claim 7.

25. (New) In a method of making a seasoning, the improvement comprising producing L-glutamic acid according to the method according to claim 17.

26. (New) In a method of making a seasoning, the improvement comprising producing L-glutamic acid according to the method according to claim 18.

27. (New) In a method of making a seasoning, the improvement comprising producing L-glutamic acid according to the method according to claim 19.